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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/550,118	09/19/2005	Hisashi Akiyama	10873.1780USWO	1217
53148	7590	01/02/2008	EXAMINER	
HAMRE, SCHUMANN, MUELLER & LARSON P.C. P.O. BOX 2902-0902 MINNEAPOLIS, MN 55402			WEATHERBY, ELLSWORTH	
		ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER	
		3768		
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		01/02/2008	PAPER	

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/550,118	AKIYAMA ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Ellsworth Weatherby	3768	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 19 September 2005.
 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-6 is/are pending in the application.
 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
 6) Claim(s) 1-6 is/are rejected.
 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
 10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ . |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>9/19/2005</u> . | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ . |

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Objections

1. Claims 1-6 are objected to because of the following informalities: Applicant uses the term, "ROM" without providing a definition in the specification. For the purposes of examination "ROM" is being interpreted as "device". Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

2. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

3. Claims 1-6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yamamoto et al. (GB 2 216 660 A) in view of Pini (USPN 5,159,931).

Yamamoto et al '660 (hereinafter Yamamoto) teaches An ultrasonic probe, comprising: an ultrasonic transducer that scans an ultrasonic beam (Fig. 1, ref. 11); a transducer-swinging motor that allows the ultrasonic transducer to perform swing scanning in a direction crossing a scanning direction of the ultrasonic beam (Fig. 1, refs. 12-13); a rotary encoder that generates a pulse according to a rotational position of the transducer-swinging motor (Fig. 1, ref. 14); and an encoder correction device that stores an actual swing scanning angle of the ultrasonic transducer and outputs the stored actual swing scanning angle of the ultrasonic transducer to outside (pg. 5, par. 3-4). Yamamoto also teaches that the correction device stores swing directional angles that

are different between a forward path of swing scanning and a return path of the swing scanning (pg. 6, par. 1).

Yamamoto et al. '660 teaches using a digital switch that can be used as a correcting signal to an output signal of the encoder (pg. 8, par. 2). However, Yamamoto does not expressly teach a counter that counts the outputs from the rotary encoder.

In the same field of endeavor, Pini '931 (hereinafter) Pini teaches a counter that controls a counter for sectorial scanning and a counter for rotation control which are combined for controlling the stepper motor driver (col. 8, ll. 40-58).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify Yamamoto with Pini. The motivation to modify Yamamoto with Pini would have been to control and for the labeling of the images stored to memory, as taught by Pini (col. 8, ll. 59-67).

Claims 3-6 do not contain any feature which, alone or in combination with the features of any claim they refer meet the requirements of novelty and/or inventive step over claims 1 and 2. Therefore, the same reasoning from claims 1 and 2 applies *mutatis mutandis* to the subject matter of the corresponding claims 3-6.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Ellsworth Weatherby whose telephone number is (571) 272-2248. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m..

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Eleni Mantis-Mercader can be reached on (571) 272-4740. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

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